

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Anne Arundel
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER: 69-05-19-0004 DATE: 5/15/69

1. NAME
COMMON: The South River Club
AND/OR HISTORIC: The South River Club

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: South River Club Road
CITY OR TOWN: Harwood Post Office
STATE: Maryland
CODE: 19 COUNTY: Anne Arundel CODE: 003

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clubhouse

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNERS NAME: The South River Club
STREET AND NUMBER: South River Club Road
CITY OR TOWN: Harwood Post Office
STATE: Maryland CODE: 20776 CODE: 19

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Maryland Hall of Records Commission
STREET AND NUMBER: St. John's Campus, College Avenue
CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis
STATE: Maryland CODE: 21404 CODE: 19
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acre

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY: Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks
DATE OF SURVEY: 1969
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Maryland Historical Trust
STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 1704
CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis
STATE: Maryland CODE: 21404 CODE: 19
ENTRY NUMBER: 69-05-19-0004 DATE: 5/15/69

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The South River Club is on the south side of South River Club Road, one mile east of Route Maryland 2; four-tenths mile west of Route Maryland 468.

The design and dimensions of this present second building are original. Fire in 1740 destroyed an earlier clubhouse and its preceeding records. The frame, white weatherboard, one-and-a-half story, one-room clubhouse is covered with a low pitched "A" roof. The exterior chimney stands at the east end. A brick-floored porch covers the front entrance door (N) and a shuttered north window; on the west are two windows, of similar design to those on the north side. The south elevation has a door and a window, each corresponding to those on the north side. Any changes or additions since the 1742 rebuilding were in order to preserve the building for the comfort and convenience of its members who have been using it continuously for 225 years.

In 1793, when the second clubhouse was 60 years old, it underwent extensive repairs at which time much of the outside weatherboard was mended or replaced as were the sills and some of the floor board. New doors replaced original ones; interior walls were replastered. In 1806 the windows in the west end were installed. In 1909 an awning was extended between the back (S) door of the clubhouse and the detached kitchen building for convenience in bad weather. This innovation is no longer used but the sockets for its supporting pipes can still be seen. In 1910 a well was dug and 1914 saw the front (N) porch added.

The interior wall covering is plaster. The crane and iron cooking utensils used in the early days of the club stand in the east-end open fireplace which still suffices to heat the building even in cold weather.

A loft above the room is accessible only by ladder. The rafters are dovetailed together. There is no ridge pole.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☐
15th Century ☐16th Century ☐
17th Century ☐18th Century ☒
19th Century ☐20th Century ☐

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1742

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

Education ☐Political ☐Urban Planning ☐Prehistoric ☐Engineering ☐

Religion/Phi-

Other (Specify) ☐Historic ☒Industry ☐losophy ☐Agriculture ☐Invention ☐Science ☐Art ☒Landscape ☐Sculpture ☐Commerce ☐Architecture ☐

Social/Human-

Communications ☐Literature ☐itarian ☒Conservation ☐Military ☐Theater ☐Music ☐Transportation ☐

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The South River Club, reputedly the first to have been established by English settlers in the colonies, survives to the mid-twentieth century as the oldest continuously used social club in the Americas.

John Gassaway, in the original deed, stated he was deeding the land to The South River Club because his father, Colonel Nicholas Gassaway, had sold it for club use for "...eight pounds." John C. Nicholas & Thomas Gassaway were among the charter members when the club was founded in 1690.

The South River Club originally took its precedent from the English club which commanded a prominent, important place in British social and intellectual life. The early members of this colonial club included prominent land-owners, the local doctor of medicine, the clergyman from All Hallow's Church and one of two distinguished merchants. The members lived within a ten-mile radius known as the South River neighborhood, an expression of the earlier "South River Hundred." These men, with their Anglo-Saxon heritage, living in near-wilderness isolation, had the precedent and the need for such a club. During the pre-Revolutionary years the Club met for all day on Thursday of each week and served as a haven of companionship and an exchange of information. After the Civil War the meetings were less frequent. Conversation was purposely directed to farming, commerce, boating, horseracing; religion and politics were taboo subjects as were the pastimes of gambling and cards. Perhaps these rules account for the Club's survival and today congeniality still transcends difference of opinion.

The Rector of All Hallow's Church, 1738-1760, the Reverend William Brogdan; Turnor Wootton, a Delegate from Prince George's County born in England in 1695, "...was a member of that club..." (Maryland in Law & History, Judge Edward S. Delaplaine, Vantage, 1964, pp.183); our internationally famous Captain Philip Van Horn Weems, USN, developer of the Weems Navigation System for Sea and Air, are among our illustrious members. [see continuation sheet]

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Information contact: Admiral Harry W. Hill, 201 Prince George Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21404
Recorder: Mrs. E. W. Bridgman, Jr., Cedar Park, Cumberstone Road, Harwood, Maryland 20776
The South River Club, A Brief History, by the Historical Committee of the South River Club, Banta Publishing Company, Wisconsin, 1952.
Living in Anne Arundel County, volume 2, Board of Education, Illustration, 1954. (Anne Arundel County Public Library, Maryland Room)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register	
ORGANIZATION Maryland Historical Trust	DATE May 7, 1969
STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 1704	
CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis	STATE Maryland CODE 19

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name Orlando Ridout IV
Orlando Ridout IV

Title State Liaison Officer
for Maryland

Date May 7, 1969

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Crampton
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date May 15, 1969

ATTEST:

William J. Mowbray
Keeper of The National Register

Date May 15, 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Anne Arundel	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

The South River Club

#6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Historical American Building Survey
1964

Library of Congress

Washington, D. C. Code: 08

#8. SIGNIFICANCE

The minutes of the club have been kept faithfully since 1740, the year the earlier house and the records, to that date, were totally destroyed by fire. There is, however, evidence of a club existing in 1723 and strong evidence that it goes back to 1700. By 1746 it was referred to as "...the ancient South River Club."

The tiny South River Club continues to flourish. The twenty-five members today can count dozens of ancestors from the Club's two-and-a-quarter century annual lists. When it meets, as it still does, four times a year, the menu features the same Southern Maryland delicacies and the exact same potent recipe for the secretly concocted punch that has warmed ancestors and descendants alike for two hundred and twenty-five years.

At the southeast corner of the intersection of Route Maryland 2 (Solomons Island Road) and S. River Clubhouse Road, a State Roads Commission marker reads:

"THE OLD SOUTH RIVER CLUB
(1 MILE ←)
ORGANIZED CIRCA 1700
HOUSE BUILT 1742
THE OLDEST SOCIAL CLUB IN AMERICA
(FIRST ROAD TO THE LEFT)"



SOUTH RIVER CLUB

AA-140

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY - SOUTHERN MARYLAND
A-B